

General Subjects Section
ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT
THE INFANTRY SCHOOL
Fort Benning, Georgia

ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS COURSE
1948 - 1949

THE JAPANESE EXPANSION IN THE PACIFIC
7 DECEMBER 1941 - 12 SEPTEMBER 1942

Type of operation described: STRATEGY AND TACTICS
IN AN OCEANIC THEATRE

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ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS CLASS NO 1

15927

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Index	1
Bibliography	2
Introduction	4
Background	4
Overall Strategy	7
Pearl Harbor	9
Guam, Wake, Midway	11
The Philippines Campaign	11
Asiatic Mainland Campaign	16
Dutch East Indies Campaign	23
The Bismarcks - New Guinea	27
The Last Phase	29
Conclusion	30
Analysis and Criticism	32
Lessons	40
Map A - Contemplated Expansion	
Map B - Philippine Islands	
Map C - Luzon	
Map D - Burma-Thailand-Indo-China	
Map E - British Malaya	
Map F - East Indies	
Map G - Actual Perimeter, 12 September 1942	

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THE JAPANESE EXPANSION IN THE PACIFIC
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INTRODUCTION

The attack on Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941, marks not only the day of the United States' entry into the war, it was also "the starter's gun" for the race against time in which the Japanese Empire hoped to establish itself supreme in Asia and the Pacific Islands so strongly that no power could displace it.

It is the purpose of this monograph to describe the expansion of the Japanese in the Pacific during the period 7 December 1941 to 12 September 1942 with a view toward crystallizing some of the military lessons to be learned. During those years the expression "Remember Pearl Harbor" was often heard among the American people. To the members of the armed services it was more than an expression; it was a command and a battle cry. And for the students of military science it should always remain a command. The surprise attack by the Japanese Forces on the United States Naval Base at Oahu, Hawaii, and the period immediately following offers many vital lessons to the strategist and tactician.

BACKGROUND

In order to understand more clearly the direction and properly evaluate the progress of events which will follow it seems appropriate to explain the sequence of presentation. Before we get into the actual step by step conquests by the Japanese during the period under discussion, we shall briefly review the political, economic and military events in the Pacific and Far East which led to the unsurprising "surprise" of Pearl Harbor.

"General Marshall has stated that a knowledge of the causes and events leading up to the present war and of the principles for which we are fighting 'is an indispensable part of military training and merits the thoughtful consideration of every

American soldier." (1)

The political and economic background was directly influential. In 1941 Japan had come under the complete control of a strong militaristic clique of Army and Navy officers. The Emperor was a mere figurehead under their direct influence. The ever increasing population of the already overcrowded main islands needed food. The rapidly expanding industrialization suffered from a dearth of natural resources and markets for its products. For many years the Japanese people had cast envious eyes upon the nearby continent of Asia with its huge land mass, wealth of resources and millions of potential customers. The success of the Boxer uprising in China in 1898, the war with Russia in 1904-5, with the acquisition of Korea, the "Mukden Incident" in 1931 with the occupation of Manchukuo, all spurred the desire for greater expansion. More rapid progress was not attempted because of the need to build up strength - and because of possible recrimination at the hands of Russia, United States and Great Britain. But confidence and the aggressive spirit were becoming ingrained. A full scale invasion of China was begun in 1937 after a deliberately staged "incident" near Peiping. After quick initial advances in which the principal ports and cities of China were seized, the attack bogged down. The rebellious spirit of the Chinese under Chiang Kai-shek, the very extent of the land, and the help to China from Russia and the United States kept a decisive conclusion out of reach. After almost ten years of conflict Japan had a large experienced Army and Navy, but the cost had been a great burden on the people without appreciable material gain. The general restlessness was acute. (2)

With the outbreak of war in Europe the Military leaders of Japan were quick to take advantage of the opportunity available. They pointed to the vast unexploited resources of Southeast Asia and the East Indies; the unlimited quantities of oil, rubber, tin, iron, coal, hemp, naval stores -

(1) R4, Preface; (2) R14 p.15.

and the potential market. The control of these would bring about the prompt subjugation of China, the realization of the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"; then, maybe India? Russia? - the world?

The plan went into effect cautiously. The possibility of interference from Britain and the United States must not be underrated. In 1940 concessions in Indo-China were made by the impotent French Vichy Government. Once the foothold had been made, complete control was quick to follow. New bases were put into use, bombing the last available source of supply to China, the Burma Road. (3)

The sympathies of the American people had been with the Chinese. This was due in large measure to the fact that Japan had shown complete disregard of her treaties ("The Nine Power Pact", 1921, "The Four Power Pact", 1921, "The Pact of Paris, 1928) and refused to have her actions judged by other nations by withdrawing from the League of Nations in May 1933. The governments of the United States and Great Britain became perturbed with the Japanese seizure of Hainan Island (off the coast of Indo-China) and the Spratley Islands (between Borneo and the Philippines). in 1939. Both were critical if the Japanese had designs on the Indies. Congress passed the Selective Service Act on 16 September 1940. On 27 September 1940 Japan signed an agreement with Germany and Italy wherein the Far East was conceded to the aims of Japan. The United States stopped shipments of scrap iron and gasoline to Japan and in March 1941 included China in the Lend-Lease Program. In April 1941 Japan and Russia signed an agreement to refrain from war for five years. In July 1941 the United States, Britain and The Netherlands froze the assets of Japan. Diplomatic overtures for settlement were made, but the United States demanded return of the seizures and abandonment of the current policies of Japan; neither would make concessions. On 17 October 1941 Hideki Tojo, former Chief of

(3) R18 pp.181-185

the Army General Staff and War Minister, became Premier of Japan and formed a new cabinet. Japan was prepared to carry through her program by force. For almost a year plans had been formulating for the attack on Pearl Harbor should it become necessary. Special Envoy Kurusu was dispatched to Washington for a last attempt at conciliation. In the meantime the Imperial General Headquarters had alerted all its forces for war early in December. It was while these conferences were in progress that the Japanese struck Pearl Harbor. (4) (5)

OVERALL STRATEGY

The basic strategical plan for the conduct of the war was extremely well conceived. It embodied three phases: (6) (Map A)

I. Seizure of the Southern Resources Area with its vast quantities of oil, rubber, quinine, tin, nickel, iron, gold, and others.

These would make Japan self-sufficient, and at the same time deny them to the Allies. Its attainment included the following steps:

A. Destruction of the United States Pacific Fleet, thus securing the left flank and preventing the arrival of reinforcements.

B. Elimination of British, Dutch and American Forces in the Far East.

C. Establishment of a perimeter defense about the homeland and the Southern Resources Area by the seizure of the essential areas and islands.

II. The accomplishment of a chain of strongholds to strengthen and otherwise consolidate the perimeter. This ring to extend about the islands of the northern Kuriles, Wake, Marshall, Gilbert, Bismarck, northern New Guinea, Timor, Java and Sumatra, and into

(4) R4 p.c4 (5) R7 p.60 (6) R3 p.2

northern Burma.

- III. The defeat of any attempt to pierce the defensive perimeter and the initiation of plans to neutralize the will of the people of the United States to continue the fight; air power and a floating reserve would intercept and destroy any threat.

Supplementary strategy to reinforce the basic plan included:

- A. Continuous air and sea raids on the nearest bases of the Allies in order to inflict losses on fighting elements and decrease their effectiveness;
- B. Strikes against Allied lines of communication following the pattern of the German submarine operations.

The most outstanding feature of this plan is that it presents the concept of the military leaders that the whole effort would constitute a "limited war". It envisaged the immediate objectives to be within the grasp of a sudden bold strike. Once these were in Japanese control, the geographical circumstances of the situation were ideal for a prolonged war which would ultimately end in a stalemate and a negotiated peace.

Subsequently, the leisurely exploitation of the new territories would not only make Japan self sufficient, but would provide the means to achieve future aspirations. (7) (8)

The accomplishment of Phase I of the strategic plan was based upon the subdivision of the overall objective into several specific operations. The area of the undertaking was immense. Roughly measured it would form a rectangle on the globe approximately 6,000 miles laterally by 4,000 miles vertically. Each objective was isolated by an expanse of water. The reduction and seizure of the isolated objectives was assigned to specially organized task forces. These task forces consisted of elements of the Army, Navy and Air Corps in proportions deemed necessary to accomplish the

(7) R11 p.25 (8) R17 p.72

specific mission. All elements were rehearsed and coordinated and under one commander. The troops were appropriately trained and equipped; considerable experience had been gained in the battles in China. The Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo retained direct control of all operations except those in the Southern Resources Area; these were placed under the Headquarters Southern Army Group in Saigon, Indo-China. Early in November the alert order was issued. Each force assembled at the closest area to its particular objective consistent with secrecy. All forces, except that for the Dutch Indies, were to assume the offensive at the same time. Each was briefed and poised. "D-day" was the day of attack at Pearl Harbor; "H-hour" was dependent first, on word of success of that attack and secondly, local weather conditions. From that moment the execution of the plan would proceed according to a carefully detailed schedule. (9)

Thus, we see that in addition to the careful preparations the strategy employed would exploit the advantages of surprise to the utmost. The dispersion of forces against different objectives in several directions and at the same time, is unique in so far as it is a violation of a military principle. Its deliberate adoption borders on ingenuity.

The specific aims of each operation will be discussed as separate campaigns, although the events which follow arise concurrently and often simultaneously.

PEARL HARBOR

At 0740 8 December 1941 the Army, Navy and Marine personnel of the United States Forces on Hawaii were enjoying their customary privilege of sleeping late on Sunday. The ships were tied to assigned piers or at their usual berths in the channel. The planes at each of the fields dispersed about the island of Oahu were closely grouped on the ground as a precaution against sabotage. Such was the target presented to the first wave of

(9) R11 p.24

Japanese planes as they rounded the northwest point of the island. The first flight of 54 dive bombers and 45 fighters struck the army field at the main base at Schofield Barracks before continuing to the east to hit the Naval Air Stations on Ford Island and Kaneohe Bay and Bellows Field. The balance of the first flight, consisting of 40 torpedo bombers and 50 horizontal bombers, circled around the southwest to deliver the main blow at the ships and facilities in the harbor and at Hickam Field. A repeat performance took place about an hour later. This time approaching from the northeast and east, 81 dive bombers and 54 horizontal bombers concluded the devastation of the naval base while 36 fighters quickly disposed of the few planes that were still able to leave the ground. In less than two hours of action the mission had been accomplished. (10) (11)

The success of the raid was flashed to the Imperial General Headquarters. With this signal the schedule for the rest of Phase I of the Japanese plan went into effect. The possibility of intervention or assistance by the United States Pacific Fleet, though not completely eliminated, had been sufficiently impaired. Thorough prior intelligence, detailed preparation and superb execution had achieved not only complete surprise of the defending forces, but a reverberating shock to the American people. (12) (13) (14)

In view of the world situation during summer of 1941, the United States had begun a program of preparation, particularly toward strengthening its Pacific bases. On the day of the attack, however, relatively minor progress had been made. The strength of the outposts was decidedly inferior in numbers, training and equipment. Moreover, the defenses had been left to the individual means of the Army and Navy. Presumably, cooperation between the services would be effected without coordination by a single headquarters. Consequently, while the Army was disposed for the ground defenses, the Navy patrolled the seas from the United States to the Philippines. Even while the attack was raging in Pearl Harbor a fleet

(10) R7 p.62 (11) R16 p.81 (12) R15 p.325 (13) R20 pp.31-32
(14) R17 pp73-75

consisting of a carrier, three heavy cruisers, and nine destroyers approached Hawaii from the southwest, while a similar fleet was enroute from Hawaii to Midway. Though monitoring Japanese traffic, the attack force had been undetected. This task force consisting of six aircraft carriers, with 414 planes, two battleships, three cruisers, nine destroyers, three submarines and eight tankers, had proceeded with radio silence from the Kuriles on 2 December. By pursuing a direct easterly course between Midway and the Aleutians and turning southwest after passing the International Date Line, it successfully eluded the patrols concentrated in the south seas. On the evening of 7 December it had arrived at its planned position 200 miles north of Hawaii from which the assault was made. (15) (16)

GUAM, WAKE, MIDWAY

The United States' possessions, Guam, Wake and Midway Islands, were given the same treatment ^{as} Oahu and on the same day. These installations had been alerted so were not surprised by the arrival of the attackers. They were, however, powerless to do more than put up a brief fight. Guam in the Marianas and Wake, near the Marshalls were well within the projected perimeter of the Japanese. After days of heavy aerial bombardment from the nearby bases, troops were landed under the protection of offshore naval fire and both islands had been captured by 23 December. Midway had been subjected to heavy fire from two Japanese destroyers after dark of the 8th of December. Very heavy damage was done to the hangars and other facilities, but no further attacks were made for the next six months. (17) (18) (19) (20) (21)

THE PHILIPPINES CAMPAIGN

The task of seizing the Philippine Islands was assigned to the Fourteenth Army. General Homma, reputedly an outstanding Japanese

(15) R17 p.74 (16) R7 p.62 (17) R8 p.27 (18) R20 p.34
 (19) R15 p.447 (20) R5 pp.98-100 (21) R16 p.125

tactician, was placed in command. The First Fleet was assigned to support the operation. The primary mission was to destroy the United States Air Force stationed in the Philippines. This would facilitate the use of the islands as bases for Japanese planes.

A belated attempt had been made on the part of the United States to strengthen the defenses of the islands. On 26 July 1941 the Philippine Army had been ordered into service as the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFPE), under the command of Lieutenant General MacArthur. General MacArthur had been retired in 1937 but was retained by the Philippine Government to build up its army in anticipation of its independence in 1945. At this time the defenses consisted of approximately 110,000 men of which 10,400 were Americans; about 300 aircraft, and 5,000 aviation personnel under Major General Brereton; and a small Asiatic Fleet under Admiral Hart. The fundamental weaknesses appear in the facts that: this force was smaller than the invaders; the bulk of the native troops were insufficiently trained and equipped; only 125 of the available aircraft were not obsolete; and the Navy almost insignificant. With the imminence of hostilities General MacArthur's plan was to defend Luzon as long as possible before retiring to the Bataan peninsula and the Manila Bay fortresses until rescued by the United States Navy. Accordingly, on the day of attack the troops were disposed into a North Luzon Force under Major General Wainwright, a South Luzon Force under General Parker, a Visayan-Mindanao Force, a Philippine Coast Artillery Command, and a USAFFE Reserve. The Air Force was stationed chiefly in the area near Manila, except for 35 flying fortresses which were split up between Clark Field, Luzon and Del Monte Field, Mindanao, where the only facilities existed which could accommodate them. The Fleet withdrew to the southern waters to avoid being trapped. The orders were: a) repel any landing, b) destroy the beachhead if established, and failing in that, c) make a fighting withdrawal to Bataan. (22) (23) (24) (25) (Map B)

(22) R17 pp.87-90 (23) R13 pp.1-5,11,20 (24) R18 pp.36,210 (25) R20 p.78

The major portion of the invading force was on Formosa, only 500 miles away. There was another portion in the Ryukus, and a third portion on Palau. The first long range Navy planes bombed Baguio and Toquegarao on Luzon at 0930 8 December 1941. Without adequate air warning nets the American planes were feinted away from base or caught on the ground by successive Japanese flights. By nightfall Clark Field, Iba Field and Nichols Field were in shambles; only half of the bombers and two-thirds of the fighters remained. By 10 December the Japanese had achieved their primary objective - air control of the Philippines. The balance of ten bombers departed for Del Monte Field in Mindanao and the few remaining fighters confined purely to reconnaissance missions. The naval base at Cavite had also been destroyed. (26)

Meanwhile the landing operations had begun. On 10 December the small defending units at Aparri on the north coast of Luzon and at Vigan on the west coast were defeated. On 12 December the Japanese group from Palau made landings at Legaspi. With the diversionary landings, General Homma was beginning to close the pincers on Manila. On 18 December Japanese Army planes from the field at Aparri began to supplement the air bombing and strafing which had continued daily unabated. The main landing began at Lingayen Gulf during darkness on 22 December. Though the bulk of General Wainwright's troops had been placed to protect this area, the outnumbered, under-trained newer units broke and fled before the pressure of the battle experienced Japanese regulars. The defenders retreated rapidly to successive delaying positions. The landings at Lamon Bay on 24 December of another Japanese force from the Ryukyus had been sufficient threat to prevent the commitment of the USAFFE Reserve against the Lingayen beachhead. The South Luzon Force was ordered to Bataan. General Wainwright's troops were just barely able to hold the

(26) R3 pp.27-28

critical Calumit^P Bridge across the Pampanga River long enough to permit the passage of the South Forces before the span was blown on 1 January 1942. It had been expected that the wide Pampanga River and the large swamps which border it would constitute an effective barrier. However, the aggressive Japanese lost no time in effecting a crossing and by infiltrating through the swamp had pushed the defenders back to their main battle position on Bataan by 7 January. (27) (28) (29) (Maps B and C)

For the battle of Bataan the 80,000 troops that remained were split into two Corps, General Wainwright on the left and General Parker on the right, and a small reserve. The peninsula is about 32 miles long and 20 miles wide, characterized by extremely rugged terrain with deep ravines, dense woods and jungle growth. A saddle between the northern mountain heights and the southern hill mass has the only road across it connecting the two shores. A poor road along the sheer western coast affords the only means of communication, while an excellent two-lane highway is available on the broad sandy beaches on the eastern coast. The main battle position extended from each coast to the northern mountain in the center, while the reserve position followed the east-west road across the central saddle. The speed of the retreat had not permitted adequate preparation of the positions nor successful contact of the two Corps at the mountain in the center. General Homma launched a coordinated attack on 10 January in an all-out effort to meet the detailed time schedule given him by the Southern Army Headquarters. Though massed artillery fire repelled the attempts along the Bay coast, his men easily penetrated the mountain area. Working in small groups they infiltrated through the center of the line and caused successive withdrawals by General Parker's troops. The defenders were further handicapped by the presence of 20,000 civilian refugees in their midst, the lack of food, and the ravages of diseases which it brought on. At the end of January they had fallen back (27) R5 pp. 145-153 (28) R16 p118 (29) R13 pp.35-36

to the Reserve line. Throughout February and March the battle continued along this line. For this achievement the valiant fighting of the native Philippine troops must be acknowledged. (30)

Meanwhile other events had transpired. On 25 December General MacArthur moved his headquarters to Corregidor Island and declared Manila an open city, a condition which the Japanese bombers ignored. Unable to deliver supplies except for an occasional submarine load of drugs and ammunition, the United States ordered General MacArthur to Australia where he eventually was placed in command of the Southwest Pacific Area. General Wainwright was left in command of the Philippine forces. On 3 April General Homma began his final offensive. He was reinforced by troops from China and Indo-China, several artillery battalions from Hong Kong and Japan, and forty medium bombers from Burma. The ceaseless pounding of the combined arms compelled the remnants of the Bataan force to surrender on 9 April. The historic "Death March" of over a hundred miles to the prison camps in the north followed. (31) (32) (33) (34) (35)

The fortress of Corregidor, located at the entrance of Manila Bay about two miles from the southern tip of Bataan, resisted concentrated pounding by artillery and aircraft and landing attempts until 6 May, then, due to the lack of food, the great proportion of sick and casualties, General Wainwright surrendered the forces in the Philippines.

In pursuit of their mission to establish bases for operations against the Dutch East Indies, the Japanese had landed a reinforced infantry regiment from Palau Island at Davao, Mindanao, on 20 December. However, here they did not meet such opposition as the landings on Luzon. The Philippine troops under Colonel Sharp could only resort to guerrilla tactics. With no artillery and under continuous bombing since 5 December,

(30) R5 p.303 (31) R13 p.43 (32) R22 p.213 (33) R20 p.84
(34) R16 pp.118-119 (35) R15 pp.352, 459, 464

they had not much choice. Furthermore, the invaders received considerable help from over 30,000 Japanese that had taken up residence in and about Davao in late years. Within five days not only the airfield at Davao had been put into operation, but a second base was readied for The Netherlands campaign at the small island of Jolo, between Davao and Borneo. As long as the bases were secured, General Homma had been content to leave the troops in the interior to be mopped up at leisure. With the surrender of Bataan the surplus Luzon troops and additional units from Borneo became available. These had no difficulty in swarming over the remaining islands of the Philippine Archipelago. Upon orders from General Wainwright, Colonel Sharp surrendered the Mindanao troops to the Japanese, on 14 May 1941. (36) (37) (38) (39)

ASIATIC MAINLAND CAMPAIGN

The offense on the mainland had two principal objectives:

1. Secure the western flank of the approach to the Dutch Indies by eliminating the threat of Singapore.
2. Destroy the British Army and Navy in Southeast Asia.

These objectives would, of course, effect further advantages: aid to China would be completely sealed off from the south; extensive resources of rubber, tin, oil, and other minerals would be at the disposal of the Japanese; the end of British domination in that part of the world.

The troops, planes and ships were poised and ready to strike their individual objectives.

The Twenty-Fifth Army had departed from Canton, China, several days earlier by ship and was lying off the shores of the Kra Peninsula. The Fifteenth Army was at the Indo-China-Thailand border. General Homma's forces were at Formosa, Ryukyu and Palau Islands. The Hong Kong Force prepared only a few miles from its objective. General Terauchi's Southern

(36) R16 pp.118-119 (37) R17 p.127 (38) R20 p.81 (39) R5 p.165

Army Group Headquarters at Saigon had laid its plans carefully, considered every detail, made every preparation, and timed everything to the moment. Army, Navy and Air Forces were completely coordinated. With the flash from Pearl Harbor they all went into action during the night and early morning of 8 December 1941.

The Fifteenth Army marched into Thailand where it met only token resistance. Within six hours that government announced its full cooperation with Japan. Political intrigue during the previous year had paid off. Excellent bases for operations against Burma and China were ready for use. (Maps D and E)

The Twenty-Fifth Army under General Yamashita effected three separate landings on the narrow peninsula at the north of the Malaya States. The fleet aircraft and planes from Indo-China began a devastating series of bombing and strafing attacks of all the air fields in Malaya, including Singapore, that caught four out of five planes on the ground, and left them unchallenged air supremacy.

The mainland defensive lines of the British garrison at Hong Kong were shattered within three days. The heavily mined narrow channel separating the mainland and the island was quickly cleared by a specially trained corps of swimmers. After the troops got on "the rock" on 19 December, they took control of the water supply. Much fighting was unnecessary. The defenders surrendered on 25 December. With this early defeat the British lost tremendous prestige in the Orient. (40)

The terrain and the defenses in the areas of Burma and Malaya had a large influence on the outcome. The Malaya peninsula below the site of Japanese landings is shaped similiarly to a football, about six-hundred miles in length and about two hundred miles in width. Mountains extend the entire length and are more concentrated in the central and eastern portions. The many streams throughout feed into a few large rivers,

(40) R16 pp 111-112

principally the Perak, Slim, and Muar. These flow generally North to South into the Indian Ocean. The whole area is decidedly tropical. The humidity created by the heat, heavy rains and dense foliage prohibit much physical exertion without previous months of acclimation. These conditions indicate the prevalence of insects, pests, malaria, typhoid and other diseases. The mass of the population, including almost a million Chinese, is concentrated along the rich narrow plain of the west coast where highly developed plantations produce about 42 % of the world's rubber.

One railroad serves this entire coast and extends to Singora and Bangkok in Thailand. A second railroad joins the southern tip and Thailand through the eastern valleys. These railroads and the streams offer practically the only means of communication.

Burma is very much like Malaya in so far as climate and vegetation are concerned. The extremities of the Himalaya Mountains in the north divide the country into a series of ridges and valleys as they diminish toward the sea. Away from the southern coast the broad central valley is encircled by these outlying ranges of the Himalaya Mountains. Not only do they form natural boundaries, but effective barriers to East-West communication, as there are only a few indistinct trails leading across them to Indo-China or India. On the other hand, the Irrawaddy, Sittong and Salween Rivers, flowing North and South between the series of ranges, provide excellent pathways. The only railroad also connects the principal port, Rangoon, with the extreme north. It is here that we find Lashio, terminus of the Burma Road to China.

The significant features of these areas from a military point of view are that, 1) the Malaya peninsula juts down to the islands of the East Indies so closely that the narrow strait of Malacca through which the sea traffic from eastern Asia must pass can be most effectively controlled by Singapore; 2) Burma presents an ideal cross-compartment for the hinderance of over land expeditions into India.

The defensive strength of the British in Malaya consisted of one

Australian division, two Indian divisions and a composite division of Indians and Malayan volunteers all of which totaled about 70,000. The tactical training of these troops had been both limited and along theories of European warfare. The artillery available was below proportion for the troop strength. The Air Force consisted of approximately 300 planes of which two-thirds were obsolete. The Far East Fleet based at Singapore consisted of three cruisers and six destroyers which were reinforced by two new battleships and three carriers on 2 December. We have already noted how the war in Europe had delayed more effective reinforcements. Since the threat was from the east and north the general plan was to meet attacks from those directions and gradually withdraw to a firm line extending along the Muar River on the west all the way across the peninsula to the eastern shore. This was the Johore Line on which they confidently figured to gain sufficient time for the arrival of adequate reserves. Presumably, the thought was never entertained that Singapore was anything but "impregnable".

The forces in Burma consisted of less than two divisions (mostly native and Indian) and a squadron of obsolete fighter planes. The general concept was that no advances would be made toward Burma by the Japanese until Malaya had fallen. Therefore, the limited flow of new strength had been channeled toward the latter.

General Yamashita's forces, consisting primarily of two Infantry Divisions, four tank regiments and eleven artillery battalions, were quickly joined by another division from Indo-China by way of Thailand. While the bulk of the force moved from Singora directly to the western coast by means of the the railroad and the one principal road, a second column started from Patani to join it at Ipoh. The balance of the troops which had initially been repelled by the garrison at Kota Bharu, quickly made a successful landing just to the south of those defenses and was soon moving toward Singapore in two columns, also. While one moved quickly along the eastern shore without much resistance, the second column moving along the interior railroad was effectively withheld by the defenses along

the deep mountain cuts. But even these had to give way in the face of the continuous threats by the column proceeding down the western coast. By the end of three weeks of fighting the British colonial troops had been driven to the vicinity of their preplanned southern line. Exhausted and completely demoralized, they had been outmaneuvered and outwitted by the more superior trained and equipped Japanese troops. The series of road blocks and defenses along the banks of the Perak and Slim Rivers had proved inadequate. (Map E)

The advance down the western coast was characterized by a technique that had long been practiced in the similar grounds of Hainan and Indo-China. Scouts mounted on bicycles preceded the column; as soon as a road block or resistance was encountered, tanks came forward to knock it out - often these light tanks came across presumably impassable terrain. If tanks were not available or could not get through, then planes came in to bomb and strafe. Meanwhile, the infantry enveloped one or both flanks. Along the river defenses the envelopments were made by putting out to sea in small boats and effecting landings below the lines. And there was always the threat of the other parallel column.

The Japanese soldier gave ample display of his individual skill and physical conditioning. Able to sustain himself with meager rations and "living off the land", he moved alone or in small groups, through the jungles or down the streams. He infiltrated the defenders' lines, or masqueraded as a civilian to successfully attack the rear or destroy supply dumps. Armed with light automatic weapons, grenades and small mortars, he fully exploited the advantages afforded by the terrain. By way of adding insult to injury, firecrackers were used to augment the noise and confusion of these surprise attacks to deceive the besieged as to the true strength or direction of the assault. (41)

(41) R17 p.103

As the left flank had to draw back from a heavy attack along the Muar River on 17 January because of another envelopment by sea, the Johore Line was abandoned. Only one more line about twenty-five miles to the rear was briefly held before all troops were withdrawn to Singapore on 31 January. The defenders on the island could have been starved into submission but General Yamashita chose not to lose time. On 5 February a terrific bombardment of the island was begun from the mainland. The big guns of the fortress emplaced to defend toward the sea in the opposite direction were of little use in returning this fire. On 8 February successful landings across the 1200 yard wide straits were made at both the eastern and western ends of the island. The causeway was promptly seized and repaired and troops and tanks poured across. On 15 February Singapore surrendered. (42)

One other important event in connection with the Malaya campaign bears attention. A Japanese submarine had reported the approach of the British Fleet. The British Far East Fleet, including the new super battle ^{ship}-cruisers, "Prince of Wales" and ^{battle cruiser} "Repulse" were out in search of the Invasion Force in the South China Sea. On 10 December a group of torpedo planes and bombers was sent to attack and within two hours both capital ships had been sunk. This action not only proved the inadequacy of anti-aircraft fire as defense for ships against planes, but the supremacy of the Japanese Navy in the Pacific was left unchallenged. (43)

The campaign in Burma was scheduled to take place following the termination of that in Malaya. The immediate mission of the Fifteenth Army, since it consisted of only two divisions, was to stabilize the situation in Thailand and to forestall any attempt by the British to launch a counter-offensive from Burma. The Air Corps assisted by bombing the airfield at Tavoy on 10 December and Rangoon on 23 December.

(42) R4 p.11 (43) R15 p.339

The raid at Rangoon caused the frightened native laborers to flee the city with the consequence that the port facilities were left idle. A small force from Thailand was sent across the Burma border on 12 December and went almost to Tavoy before encountering any resistance. The rapid progress in Malaya permitted a full scale invasion to be initiated in mid-January. The plan proposed the continued move by one division along the coast to the north of Tavoy while a second division effected a passage through the jungle track 100 miles north of Bangkok. Tactically, the story is very much a repetition of the action in Malaya: surprise, infiltration, envelopment, and close air support. (44) (Map D)

The delaying action of the British troops was very costly to them. The only redeeming feature being that it gave them time to salvage some of the stores in Rangoon and time for the arrival of Chinese troops. Rangoon, the only source of supplies, was occupied by the Japanese on 7 March. Since Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was vitally interested in maintaining the route of supply from Rangoon to the Burma Road, he had promptly agreed to send assistance. By the end of February, the Fifth and Sixth Chinese Armies arrived. General Joseph Stilwell, United States Army, who had the capacity of Chief of Staff in the Chinese Army, also arrived to give his personal direction. As the British forces were gradually pushed toward the interior along the Irrawaddy River and the railroad, they were able to establish a fairly strong point about two hundred miles north of Rangoon. The Chinese Fifth and Sixth Armies in that order extended this general line to the Salween River in the east. This line might have been quite effective but for two factors: the troops of the Sixth Army were insufficiently trained and underequipped; positive contact had not been established between the flanks of the three defending groups. The aggressive Japanese, reinforced by the arrival of

(44) R20 p.124

the troops released from Malaya, quickly exploited both opportunities. After the disintegration of the Chinese Sixth Army, the victors continued speedily up the lower reaches of the Burma Road well into China. The penetrations in the flanks had forced the abandonment of their positions by both the British and the Fifth Army. By 30 April the withdrawal had become a complete rout with the remnants of both forces making a mad dash for the India border by every means available. (45)

Thus, with the end of the Burma campaign, the British optimistically looked back upon it as a minor success in that it promised to postpone any Japanese invasion of India until the end of the monsoon season in September. On the other hand, the success of the campaigns in Thailand, Malaya and Burma gave the Japanese an important portion of the Southern Resources Area. Not only had the western flank been secured for the invasion of the Dutch Indies, but the British power on the mainland had been wiped out. It would permit initial advances in Phase II of the overall plan, since the western anchor of the proposed perimeter was now assured.

DUTCH EAST INDIES CAMPAIGN

The time had come to capture the principal objective - the rich islands of The Netherlands. This move had been purposely delayed until the success of the earlier campaigns was assured. It undoubtedly would have been quicker and easier to have moved directly to the seizure of these islands because of the element of surprise. In that event, however, there still would have remained the uncertainty of how successfully the Japanese forces could hold them and to what extent the available resources could be exploited because of the long exposed sea route to the homeland. With the early victories in Malaya and the Philippines, (45) R15 P.440

the last cause for hesitation was removed. Both the east and west flanks were secured. The threat of British sea power and American air power had been eliminated. The South China Sea had become in effect a Japanese canal; this direct corridor to the objective was unimpeded. (46) (Map F)

The conquest of the Dutch islands is primarily a history of naval and air action. In order to appreciate more fully the strategy of the Japanese plan for this campaign, let us first examine the defensive situation. A casual glance at the map of this area reveals innumerable islands ranging in size from tiny coral outcrops in the sea to others whose area is comparable to any of our midwestern states. A closer study will further reveal that if the map of the United States were superimposed with the north west corners coincident, the extreme eastern islands would extend beyond our eastern coast. Obviously, this is a large area. The continuous chain from Sumatra to Timor is often referred to as the "Malaya Barrier", since it both separates the Pacific and Indian Oceans and forms the connecting link between Malaya, that long finger of the continent of Asia, and the lesser continent of Australia. The largest and most important island of this group is Java. It is centrally located, has great deposits of high quality oil, produces great quantities of rubber, is the most extensively developed, and has the greatest population concentration, including most of the 250,000 Dutch. (Map F)

Since The Netherlands government was in exile in England at this time, the defense of the Indies hinged dependently upon the British in Malaya. The Dutch had been alert to the possibility of invasion since the declaration of war on 7 December, but their most effective accomplishment was the detailed preparation for destruction of anything of value that might fall to the Japanese. The lack of an air force and facilities for the production of equipment precluded anything more imposing. (47)

(46) R20 p.15 (47) R15 pp.446-447

An attempt had been made toward the unification of effort by the British, American, Australian and Dutch forces as early as 10 January 1942. The operational directives were issued by this new ABDAOCM Headquarters under General Wavell of England. Lieutenant General Hunter Pooten (Dutch) and Admiral Hart (American) were placed in command of the ground and sea forces, respectively. It must be pointed out, however, that this organization was based on cooperation for the mutual welfare, rather than on decisive authority. In the face of circumstances on 25 February it dissolved altogether and each nation was left to look after its own interests.

The concept of ABCACOM was to maintain the integrity of the "Barrier", so that Australia might serve as a base for supplies from the United States to the Philippines, Malaya, and the Indies. In consequence thereof, the combined fleet of nine cruisers, twenty-three destroyers, and thirty-six submarines was engaged in conveying troops and supplies to Singapore, while the ground forces were concentrated in northeastern Sumatra.

The Japanese plan conceived a two pronged thrust at Java. The Navy was to make a wide envelopment from the east in order to secure close in air bases and cut off communication with Australia. The Army was to effect a direct landing. (48) (49)

In the first week of January the Naval operation was already underway. The Third Fleet which had supported the Philippine landings was reinforced and reconstituted as The Netherlands East Indies Force. This was divided into an Eastern Invasion Force at Jolo and a Western Invasion Force at Davao, but both would proceed concurrently. The Western Force was to advance by way of Macassar Strait to secure Dutch Borneo and seize strategic locations along the southern coast. This was readily accomplished with the successive capture of the key coastal locations of Tarakan, Balikpapan (48) R17 p.128 (49) R3 pp.29-31

and Banjarmasin on 11 January, 23 January, and 11 February, respectively. The only consoling fact for the allies out of this phase of the campaign was its first (though minor) naval victory. Admiral Hart with only four destroyers had caught the Japanese transports by surprise during the night of 23 January while they were still in the process of unloading, and succeeded in sinking four and damaging others before escaping unharmed. However, the Japanese now had full control of Borneo. Sarawak (British North Borneo) had quickly succumbed to a task force from Indo-China which effected landings at Miri, 16 December, and Kuching, 24 December.

The Eastern Invasion Force proceeded through the Molucca Sea and established bases in the Celebes at Manado, 11 January; Kendari, 23 January; Macassar, 10 February; and at Bali on 18 February. Meanwhile, its land based planes at Kendari had joined with a carrier striking force from Palau to support the landings of Davao troops in the capture of Amboina on 30 January. This had been the eastern anchor of the Dutch. Koepang, port of entry from Australia was seized on 20 February, the day after the carrier force had (completely) demolished Darwin, Australia, terminal of the Allied supply line. Since Singapore had surrendered on the 15th, Java was now isolated. (50)

The Japanese were not wasting any time. The Sixteenth Army, composed of three victorious divisions, was assigned the mission of occupying Java. The objective had been "softened up" by continuous air attacks from the bases in the Celebes and Borneo since 3 February. The operation began on 14 February with an attempt to seize the oil refineries at Palembang, Sumatra, before they could be destroyed. 450 paratroopers were dropped for this mission, and though they were wiped out almost to the man, the follow-up by a division landing on the next day was partially successful. The main body assembled on the southern shores of Borneo and Banka Island. They made successful landings at Batavia and Semarang, Java, on 28 February, (50) R20 pp.100,104,112,113

after fierce by brief resistance. In typical manner, these had been preceded by tremendous air bombardment and supported by naval gunfire. The large naval base at Surabaya had already been destroyed by bombs. As the Dutch fleet moved out to intercept the Invasion Force on 27 February, its lack of aerial reconnaissance and the superior numbers of the Japanese convoy resulted in its ultimate destruction in what is now called the Battle of Java Sea. Although scattered native resistance continued in The Netherlands East Indies, organized resistance had ended by 9 March 1942. (51) (52) (53)

PHASE II

THE BISMARCKS - NEW GUINEA

The end of Allied resistance in the East Indies also brought to a successful conclusion Phase I of the Japanese plan. The perimeter having been established, Phase II, the consolidation of the perimeter, could be expedited.

One other last step in the establishment of the perimeter needs to be summarized in order to complete the picture. The southeast sector had been secured in late December when Japanese troops from the adjoining Marshalls occupied the Gilbert Islands literally without a struggle. At this time the only remaining link was the group of the Bismarck Archipelago and the northern portion of New Guinea. This was a British controlled area whose defenses consisted principally of 1,400 Australian troops garrisoned in Rabaul, the government seat and major port. (Map G)

The capture of this area was assigned to the Fourth Fleet. Land based planes from Truk (Caroline Islands) and two aircraft carriers would support the infantry regiment and "Special Navy Landing Forces" which had been attached. The procedure followed was that typical of

(51) R3 p.30 (52) R20 p.119 (53) R17 pp. 72, 127-133, 149

the campaigns previously described: isolation of the target, concentration of forces, establishment of the base, the next advance. (Map F)

On 3 January Rabaul was bombed by a small number of planes. Thereafter the number and intensity increased almost daily, until on 23 January the ground forces, supported by naval batteries, captured the city following a raid by 100 bombers. On 8 March the entire objective was secure. (54) (55)

In the period immediately following, certain significant events occurred. For one, the ease and speed of the conquests had engendered in the Japanese a mingled attitude of overconfidence and a desire to exploit the initial successes. They reflected that Port Moresby in southern New Guinea was only 350 miles from Australia; the lower Solomons and New Caledonia were directly athwart the United States-Australia supply route; the Aleutians were within possible air striking distance of the home islands of Japan. Accordingly, the original concept of the perimeter was altered to include certain outlying bases which would serve as a line of outguards to the perimeter. It may be assumed that two immediately contributing facts toward this decision were, 1) the surprise attack on Tokyo by 16 United States Army medium bombers from an aircraft carrier on 18 April, 2) the increasingly successful raids by small but fast and powerful United States Navy task forces on the unprotected outer islands. This new expansion, of course, would delay the completion of Phase II. (Map G)

The Solomon Islands were occupied by 3 May without any serious difficulty. On 6 May the task force bound for Port Moresby was intercepted by an American Naval Task Force enroute to protect that base. The resulting conflict, generally referred to as the Battle of the Coral Sea, is peculiar to military history in that it was a naval engagement without a direct volley being exchanged between ships, and that both landbased and (54) R15 p.446 (55) R17 p.141

ship-based planes were used by both sides. Each side lost an aircraft carrier, but the ultimate victory went to the Americans because the Japanese retired with the intent of completing the mission in June. (56) (57) (58)

THE LAST PHASE

The final action with which we shall deal was contemplated to bring about in one fell swoop the attainment of both the outer perimeter and the aims of Phase III.

The implementation of the new policy resulted in the Battle of Midway and the Aleutian Landings, 4-6 June 1942. The Japanese leaders had become convinced that the occupation of Midway (approximately 1000 miles from Hawaii) and the western islands of the Aleutians (nearest land approaches from the United States to Japan) were essential to the defense of the Empire when that aspect of the war would have to be assumed. Moreover, it was felt that a crushing blow could be dealt to the American Navy; thus, the United States might promptly seek a negotiated peace.

The Grand Fleet was committed for the first time. The tremendous armada of five aircraft carriers, 14 cruisers, 11 battleships, 58 destroyers, 18 transports, 17 submarines and the essential auxiliaries, proceeded for Midway in three groups: a Striking Force, The Main Body, and the Occupation Force. Intelligence estimates as a result of the Coral Sea battle had prompted the departure date of this force since the definite location of the United States carriers in that area made it impossible for them to assist Midway. Concurrently, a Second Mobile Force of two carriers, two cruisers, five destroyers and several transports was to make a reconnaissance in force of the Aleutians and occupy Kiska and Attu Islands in the extreme west. It was further hoped that the action of the second would also constitute a feint to achieve surprise at Midway.

(56) R16 p.127 (57) R10 pp.30-33 (58) R13 p.88

As it turned out, the Japanese were surprised. Unknown to them, the Americans had reconstructed the Japanese cryptographic device and had full warning of the impending attack. Three aircraft carriers, eight cruisers, 14 destroyers and 25 submarines were assembled north of Midway by 2 June. In addition, 22 army bombers had arrived to reinforce those on the island, and 150 planes readied in Alaska. From the first counter-blows early 4 June the opposing aircraft (Japanese 250 - American 347) waged incessant battle on both fleets until the Japanese fleet escaped during the night of 6 June after abandoning the operation. The Japanese lost four large carriers, 250 planes and 100 first-line pilots, as compared to one carrier, one destroyer, 150 planes and damages to the Midway installations for the Americans. This engagement ended the Japanese expansion to the east. (59)

The Aleutians force, after overcoming difficulties with the weather and American planes, had successfully bombed Dutch Harbor and occupied Kiska and Attu. These operations had succeeded in placing Japanese troops on the very threshold of the American continent; but it should be noted that Japan's principal force for preserving the perimeter had been seriously reduced. (60) (Map G)

CONCLUSION

In concluding the account of the period 7 December 1941 to 12 September 1942, we shall summarize the strategic attitude of the opposing forces.

The arrival of General Mac Arthur in Australia on 17 March had put into effect the principle of unity of command adopted by a conference of Allied leaders in Washington in December 1941. As a result of this conference the United States had been given strategic responsibility for the war in the Pacific. In order to delineate the limits of individual authority and responsibility, the Joint Chiefs of Staffs (United States Army, Navy, Air Forces) had divided this area into two zones, the Southwest Pacific Area, and the Pacific Ocean Areas. General MacArthur was appointed supreme commander (59) R3 p.58 (60) R16 p.515

of the former, and Admiral Nimitz, the latter. The Pacific Ocean Areas were subdivided into the North, Central and South Pacific Areas. (Map G)

General MacArthur's initial mission was to hold those positions still in Allied control in order that they might serve as bases when it became possible to assume the offensive. Admiral Nimitz was to support the operations for and maintain the supply lines to General MacArthur, keep the Japanese in their present area, and protect the western shores of America.

In early August a force of approximately 15,000 Japanese made a second attempt to capture Port Moresby, but this time by way of the mountainous jungles of New Guinea. Only a small number of half-starved and sick troops had arrived to within 50 miles of the objective to threaten the defenders on 12 September. (61)

On 31 July 1942 an amphibious force of approximately 20,000 Marines was launched by the commander of the South Pacific Area for the purpose of seizing a Japanese airfield on Guadalcanal, Solomons, in order to neutralize the threat from that area. ^{low cost} The initial landings on 7 August were a success and the airfield quickly secured. Despite Japanese reinforcements and repeated counter-attacks, the Americans were still in possession on 12 September. This action is significant in that it presents the first amphibious task force of the United States in this war, and, more important, its first major offensive effort. The new organization with United Allied effort under strictly delegated responsibility had succeeded in its initial offensive acts and posed the reality of the defensive for the Japanese. (62) (Map G)

From 7 December 1941 to 12 September 1942 we have seen the Japanese Empire expand to include all of its initial objectives and preparing to defend them until such time as the United States would tire of the struggle and concede them by a negotiated peace. At this day in history, it could be said that Japan had won the war.

(61) R2 p.35 (62) R2 p.10

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

The war was a result of political and economic dissatisfaction in Japan. Moreover, war as a national instrument of policy was advocated by a forceful group of militarist who had gained control of the government. Japan had "the world to gain and nothing to lose".

Psychologically the people were ready for war. As a group they were wholly subservient to their leaders and had complete faith in them. The fact that Japan had never lost a war, the "spirit of Bushido", the propaganda and prospects of the "Greater East Asia Sphere of Co-Prosperity", had developed an aggressiveness that was incomparable. This can be exemplified in the statement of the United States Ambassador to Japan from 1932-1941, Honorable Joseph C. Grew:

"Probably no other factor has contributed more heavily to the preliminary victories achieved by the Japanese in this war than the offensive spirit which permeates all of the armed forces of the Empire." (63)

The very moment seemed opportune; it was "now, or never". The only forces which could possibly restrain the aims proposed were Great Britain, Russia and the United States. Russia and Great Britain were even then battling for their very existence in Europe before the German onslaught. America was occupied in developing material assistance to them and speeding up preparations for its own defense.

The important point is that, we, the military leaders, recognize that we must keep abreast of these political and economic developments in the world so that we may do our full share both as citizens to aid our government in resolving the conditions of unrest, and as soldiers to defend our nation should conflict become inevitable.

The basic strategical plan, at first glance, violates a fundamental

(63) R9 p.8

principal of warfare - the dispersion of forces against several objectives at one time and all in different directions. Such a plan is susceptible to a concentration of opposing forces and piecemeal destruction. Herein lies the paradox. The risk was there, but it had been well calculated. The forces of the Empire were vastly superior in number, training, experience and equipment to any that could be quickly assembled against them. Moreover, those forces were only loosely allied, and not under a single unified direction of command. The United States and Great Britain either together or singly, had a much greater potential for war, but this could be offset by the element of surprise and an aggressive initiative. By striking in every direction at once the defenders would be further deceived as to the ultimate objectives and greater surprise effected.

The attitude of the American government at this time was to strongly oppose any further extension of Japanese holdings in the Far East. That is what brought about the embargo early in 1941 and the conference in Washington later. We can presume that the United States was willing to oppose such action by force if necessary. The base in Hawaii was in the process of being built up and the Pacific Fleet already based there deliberately to meet such a contingency. If the Japanese were to hold the Southern Resources Area successfully and eliminate the opposition already there, they must first remove the possibility of reinforcements arriving. These reinforcements must come through Hawaii, Wake, Guam, because of the long ocean trip involved. With efficient intelligence on the Pacific Fleet, thorough preparations and the complete surprise of an unexpected attack, the potential of the United States would be severely hampered. This action did secure the left flank for the campaign in the Resources Area.

The Japanese leaders miscalculated the effect the attack at Pearl Harbor would have upon the American people. They were deeply angered by the "sneak" attack and not only shaken from their complacent attitude on world affairs but immediately divorced from their policy of isolationism.

Within three weeks a meeting was held of the top government and military leaders of the nations opposed to Japan - Germany - Italy. They agreed upon unity of effort and overall strategy. The development of the tremendous war potential of the United States was given sudden impetus. The first bombs had brought about the open alliance of the individual forces that Japan had set upon to conquer.

The reaction of Pearl Harbor also affected the Japanese military leaders' concept of a "limited war". The principle of seizing a well defined objective for the purpose of holding it for an extended period with a superior force is accepted in military science. The principle had already been amply illustrated to the Japanese in all their previous wars: Russia, 1904; World War I, 1918; Manchuria, 1931; China, 1932-1941. The fallacy appears in the adoption of such a concept at this particular time in history. The English speaking peoples took up the cry, "kill the yellow bastards". The conflict evolved into a struggle for racial supremacy. As such, it would be a bitter dual to the end in which the side with the greatest resources would destroy the other; not the "negotiated peace" and retention of its conquests contemplated by the Imperial Headquarters. In this same respect, the aims of the Japanese among themselves were not crystallized. The military leaders failed to coordinate with the political - economic leaders. While the recommendations of the military were substantially based on the potential available at that time to assure success of their limited objective, the political commitments to Germany and economic aims definitely invited "total war". The military leaders did not recognize this contingency, nor were they prepared to meet it.

Pearl Harbor brought about further repercussions within the defensive organization of the United States. Glaring weaknesses were brought to light. The military leaders had committed the unpardonable errors of underestimating the capability of the foe and getting caught by surprise. In the first instance, the political leaders must accept a share in the negligence.

They were pursuing a course of diplomacy which demanded the support of the armed forces, but failed to give the latter the close liaison and sufficient funds with which to comply as expected. The attitude of the American people was of superiority over the Japanese. This belittling was detrimental to the development of the means to keep a close scrutiny on the Japanese might. In the second instance, the defenses of Hawaii were left separately to the Navy and the Army. Each was unknowingly relying upon the other for adequate warning. The immediate results were disastrous and delayed the Allied offensive in the Pacific. The action did point up the consequences of the lack of unity in command between the services and it brought about the correction of this defect.

The elimination of the British, Dutch and American forces in the Far East was a relatively simple matter. These forces were distributed at various strong points throughout the area. Each of these areas was separated by water over an expanse much larger than the continental area of the United States. Reserves, reinforcements and supplies would have to come by ship or plane; both of these were extremely limited and obsolete. The troops were small in number and inadequately trained; their equipment was inferior. Within each island of resistance the defenders were hampered by lack of modern communication facilities and roads. The interiors were undeveloped in most instances. The Japanese had thorough knowledge of these factors through their many years of commercial intercourse and from agents posted throughout the area. Each factor had been fully considered and found outweighed by their preparation. They had a large modern battle fleet, an up-to-date air force of thousands of planes, and a huge well-trained and equipped, experienced army. This favorable comparison could be made not only against each defending force individually, but against all of them combined.

At the beginning each nation, the United States, Great Britain and Holland, was short-sightedly operating only in terms of protecting its own interests. Some thought had been given to mutual assistance as early

as 1940 when the British Commander in Malaya and General MacArthur in the Philippines had agreed to mutual aid, but no concrete agreements were made or positive steps taken by either country. Even the formation of ABDACOM after the war was in its second month would have proved more realistic and effective if it had been based upon distinct authority rather than cooperation. A combined defense under a united command at least would have gained time.

The Japanese recognized this fact, too. They could afford to sell space for time. They were moving against time. Assistance would have to come from America. It was a long distance away, but more important to the Japanese, they would have to get possession of their objectives and set up the perimeter before America would have time to prepare the assistance.

The principle of the "perimeter defense" was proved valid throughout World War II in both hemispheres of operations and in a multitude of instances ranging from the smallest to the largest fighting units. To the Japanese must go the credit for its innovation. Considering the vastness of the area, almost all water, and the thousands of islands, no other plan of defense could be more feasible and at the same time so conserving of strength. An invading force would be compelled to approach over long distances by water in limited numbers and proceed slowly from island to island. Thus, while the specific island garrison warned of this approach and delayed the landing troops it would be assisted by the airpower stationed on nearby islands until the powerful floating reserve would arrive to deliver the final blow.

The general plan of defense in the Philippines was well conceived. The selection of the peninsula of Bataan for a final stand was excellent. It did oblige the Japanese to keep a large force committed at a time when it might well have been required elsewhere. The effectiveness of the resistance, such as it was, must be credited to the Filipino troops. Since the majority of these had received such limited prior training, it is apparent that their efforts were due to their loyalty to America. *protecting own home*

The tactics of the Japanese invasion force offer an excellent model

for an island offensive. Not only in the Philippines, but throughout the several areas it was a successful technique: longer range aircraft to destroy defensive bases; shorter range planes to assure aerial superiority and continued destruction of defensive installations; diversionary initial landings by ground forces; major landings under cover of naval gunfire; concentration of forces and establishment of bases; advancement to the next objective while the hinterlands are "mopped up". The entire progression was characterized by speed and as a result the offensive was facilitated by the maximum exploitation of initiative and surprise. The elimination of American airpower in the Philippines permitted the establishment of closer bases for the operations against the Indies.

The training and experience of the Japanese soldier are most clearly seen in the Malaya campaign. Here the British troops were completely outwitted and demoralized by the alert Japanese. The defenses were based upon a) the anticipation of landings along the eastern shore, b) the impenetrability of the jungles, c) blocking of the limited overland routes of travel, d) tactical training along theories evolved in the last European War, e) the impregnability of the naval base at Singapore. The Japanese troops made their principal effort down the western coast spearheaded by light tanks and armored units, often crossing the presumably impassable terrain with ease. Stubborn road blocks were quickly reduced by close air support or enveloped by amphibious hops along the coast, or by foot troops who proved quite familiar with the jungles and expert at infiltration. Japanese planes bombed Singapore with practically no opposition. British troops from India or Burma might have relieved the pressure on the Malaya defenders by a counter-attack from the north, but this had not been attempted. Had such action occurred, however, the Japanese army in Thailand was prepared to meet it.

The sinking of the "Prince of Wales" and the "Repulse" on 10 December proved not only the vulnerability of warships to enemy air attack unless adequately protected by friendly fighters, but emasculated the British

Naval Fleet in the Far East. The eventual surrender of Singapore left the Japanese with absolute control of the air and sea and the Dutch East Indies with virtually no protection.

The plan and execution of the Burma campaign was flawless. The tactics were essentially the same as in the Philippines and Malaya. From the standpoint of the defenders, a few criticisms may be made. To begin with, the natives had no liking or sense of loyalty to the British. They abandoned the vital port facilities at Rangoon as soon as it was bombed by the Japanese. With a friendlier attitude and keener awareness the British might have developed a native force during the months prior to the war that would offer at least numerically stronger resistance to the Japanese. The British forces were slow in other ways: they fought at their delaying positions so long that repeatedly the Japanese effected a complete envelopment; they called upon Chinese assistance after it was too late to save their only port of supply, Rangoon. Later, the failure to establish direct contact between the British and Chinese elements permitted a penetration which resulted in the complete abandonment of the defenses. The occupation of Burma gave the Japanese the western anchor to their contemplated perimeter, and sealed off this source of supplies to China.

The East Indies campaign, as well as the attacks at Pearl Harbor, Wake, the Solomons and Midway, typify the range, mobility and power of the Carrier Striking Force. This self-sustaining unit capable of traversing long distances to deliver a devastating blow was ideal for operations in these geographical circumstances. The first American successes came as a result of the later adoption of the idea it presented, i.e. - General Doolittle's raid on Tokyo. The Indies were progressively isolated by the destruction of air defenses and sea power. Extensive shore lines and lack of roads and railways necessitated the dispersion of defensive forces. Without danger of interception the landing forces could concentrate superior strength at a particular point and eventually overcome the separate points of resistance. In the defense of Java, the remnants of the Dutch Fleet

could not even deliver a final attempt at the troopships because the lack of aerial reconnaissance prevented it from locating them.

Inconsistencies in the Japanese progression of successes can be noted in the final phases. The original plan called for the immediate reinforcement of the perimeter as soon as it was established. The Japanese strategists had apparently become both overconfident and over cautious at the same time. Their decision to alter the original perimeter resulted not only in the first major defeat of the Japanese, but in the serious impairment of their mobile striking force with which they had planned to effect Phase III of the general strategic plan.

The occupation of Attu and Kiska posed an immediate threat to the American people. Moreover, it initiated feverish activity for the defenses of that area and sharpened their awareness of the war. This would make it more difficult to accomplish the negotiated peace for which the Japanese were striving.

The defeat of the fleet at the Battle of Midway, 6 June 1942, can be traced to the following facts: failure of Japanese counter-intelligence; failure of the Japanese Fleet to engage the American Fleet in surface to surface action; prior alertness and readiness of the Americans. Electrical transmission of information pertaining to the Midway operation had been intercepted by the Americans. They had several months earlier reconstructed the Japanese cryptographic device. Since the Japanese had not taken the precaution of modifying this means of communication frequently, but confidently relied upon its integrity, the Americans were permitted ample warning to prepare counter measures. Had the fleet elected to close with the American ships in an all out effort instead of promptly withdrawing after losing its aircraft, it might well have won a complete victory since it had a much superior force. The United States Navy had lost no time in assembling every available ship in the entire Pacific for the protection of Midway.

The reorganization of the defenses of the Allies along lines of United effort and supreme authority was permitted the opportunity for initial offensive action. The loss of the Japanese fleet at Midway had necessitated the use of a large number of troops to go by a slow, difficult overland route in order to try to seize Port Moresby. Loss of time left the defenders in a favorable position. The construction of an airfield in the southern Solomons was such an imposing threat to the life line between the United States and Australia that it not only invited counter-measures, it made them imperative. When the Japanese were confronted at Guadalcanal with the same type of amphibious action that had characterized their own successes, they were improperly prepared to conduct defensive action.

LESSONS

1. The professional soldier must keep abreast of political and economic developments in the world if he is to give his country the best contribution of his ability.
2. The land, sea and air forces of a nation must be under one supreme commander if complete coordination and cooperation are to be effected.
3. Strategic military plans must be a reflection of and consistent with the political aims of a nation.
4. Comparative weakness in the armed forces of one nation may invite attack by a more powerful nation.
5. The defense of colonies, territories or possessions can be exceedingly facilitated or hampered by the attitude of the natives.
6. The carrier striking force with its range, mobility, and shock action is an ideal organization for operations in an oceanic theater.
7. The defense of island areas requires strong navys and air forces.
8. Undeclared war is conducive to strategical surprise.
9. Naval units are extremely vulnerable to air attack unless protected

by adequate air support.

10. Tactical surprise can be achieved by striking widely separated objectives simultaneously.

11. Troops should be trained and equipped according to the physical circumstances of the area in which they are to be employed.

Forward - 12. There are exceptions to accepted tactical principles.

13. An offensive attitude coupled with a strong aggressive spirit will weigh heavily in a calculated risk.

14. The momentum of speed facilitates the offensive.

15. Cryptographic devices must be changed frequently.

16. Every precaution must be taken not to underestimate the enemy - actual or potential.

17. Strategical surprise will affect the whole course of a war.

18. In matters of foreign policy involving military power, close liaison should be maintained between the government departments concerned.

19. It may be disastrous to make presumptions of the terrain or enemy intentions and capabilities.

20. Isolation of the battle ground by both sea and air (particularly in island operations discussed herein) progressively weakens the defender and gives the attacker leisure for the final blow.

21. Long lines of supply impede military operations.

22. Aerial reconnaissance is essential for modern naval warfare.

23. Accurate and up-to-date intelligence is vital to the success of military operations.